



STATE OF WISCONSIN \

DEPARTMENT OF MILITARY AFFAIRS
Wisconsin Emergency Management

2400 Wright St
P.O. Box 7865
Madison, WI 53707-7865
Telephone (608) 242-3232
Facsimile (608) 242-3247
24 Hour Emergency Hotline:
1-800-943-0003

For more information contact: Lori Getter, Crisis Communication's Manager
(608) 242-3239
(608) 516-0293 Cell

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Safety Reminders as Arctic Blast Heads Towards Wisconsin

(MADISON) Wisconsin Emergency Management and the National Weather Service are advising people to take extra precautions in the next few days as an arctic air mass moves into Wisconsin, bringing frigid temperatures combined with possibly dangerous wind chill readings. Before this bitterly cold weather arrives Friday, now is the time to make preparations.

- **If possible, avoid being outside.** If you must go out, dress for the weather. Wear loose-fitting, light-weight, warm clothing in several layers. Trapped air insulates. Layers can be removed to avoid perspiration and subsequent chill. Outer garments should be tightly woven, water repellent, and hooded. Wear a hat. Half your body heat loss can be from the head. Cover your mouth to protect your lungs from extreme cold. Mittens, snug at the wrist, are better than gloves. Try to stay dry.
- **Frostbite and hypothermia** are two dangers associated with extreme cold. ***If any of these symptoms are detected, seek medical assistance immediately!***
 - **Signs of frostbite** include the loss of feeling and white or pale appearance in extremities such as fingers, toes, ear lobes, and the tip of the nose.
 - **Signs of hypothermia** include uncontrollable shivering, memory loss, disorientation, incoherence, slurred speech, drowsiness, and apparent exhaustion.
 - **Overexertion** is also dangerous. Cold weather puts an added strain on the heart. In addition, exercise such as shoveling snow or pushing a car can bring on a heart attack or make an existing medical condition worse.
- **Pets** also need extra care when the temperatures fall. During this cold weather, dogs and cats should be brought inside. They can get frost bitten ears, nose and feet if left outside during bitter cold weather. Chemicals used to melt snow and ice can also irritate pets' paws and be sure to keep anti-freeze, salt and other poisons away from pets as well.

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- **Outdoor Animals** – livestock, horses, and other outdoor animals need readily available supply of food and fresh water, as well as adequate shelter (and perhaps bedding) from the biting cold winds. Don't forget about them.
- **Outdoor Water Spigots** – examine any outdoor water spigots for possible signs of ice blockage. If in doubt, contact a professional servicing representative. For water spigots attached to a residence, allow interior heat and air to circulate around the water pipe where it exits the building. You may have to remove some insulation to accomplish this task. Better yet, have a water valve installed on the water pipe where it exits the building – this will reduce the potential for icing in water spigots.
- **Vehicles** – make sure that your vehicles are in good working condition and keep your gas tank at least half full. Have an emergency kit for your car.
- **Carbon Monoxide (CO) Poisoning** - Carbon monoxide is an odorless, colorless, tasteless gas that kills more than 500 Americans every year. Never use generators, grills, camp stoves, or other gasoline or charcoal-burning devices inside your home, basement, garage or near a window. Also, make sure you have installed a carbon monoxide detector in your home to alert you and your family to this “silent killer.”

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